

# SALES PROCESS SURVEY 2014

A Mercuri International White Paper

Page 1 (2)

## The Survey

To grow a business and operate more efficiently than your competitors, you need a well-defined sales process. Mercuri International's Global Sales Excellence Survey from 2012 revealed that there was a 38% gap between top and low performers when it comes to having documented sales processes.

Therefore, Mercuri International's latest research study zooms in on the sales process and how the sales process is implemented in businesses. It reveals that many companies still have a long way to go when it comes to a structured sales management.

The study, conducted in Denmark in February/March 2014 covered seven different industries, and is based on answers from 563 sales people. Of those, 21% was at management level.

**31%** of businesses surveyed  
have no clearly defined sales process with a description of Key Performance Indicators

## The 'Black Box' of Sales

Sales processes and structure are essential in bringing businesses from strategy to results.



Our Global Sales Excellence Survey 2012 showed that more than 70% of successful companies have sales process defined in detail, including KPI:s, tools etc. Without a structured sales process, initiatives are left to the individual. This makes it difficult to manage the sales resources and ultimately to work according to the strategy.

Our recent survey shows that almost one out of three companies do not have a written sales process with description of the company's most critical KPI:s, which means they are less well equipped to become successful. It is also interesting to note that twice as many sales managers than sales people state that their company has a clearly defined sales process. There is a significant gap between management's perception of the existence of a documented sales process and the sales people's perception of and actual use of a common sales process.

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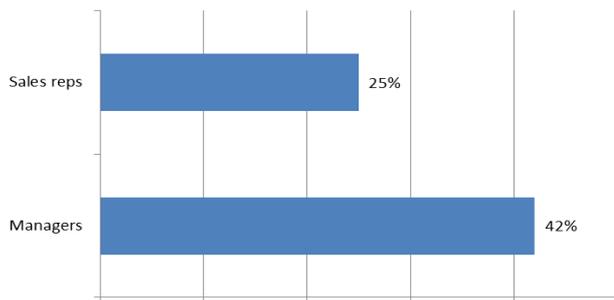
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### Too few Individual Account Plans

Developing individual business plans for each customer is one part of effective sales management. However, the survey reveals that this is not the norm. 42% of managers say they do this, and only 25% of the sales people agreed on the issue. This highlights once again the lack of alignment between management and sales people.

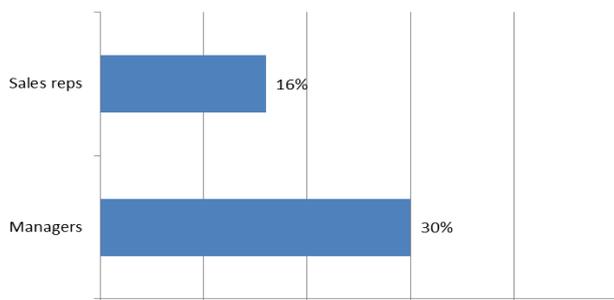


We developed individual business plans for our clients

Without account plans there is often an increase of intuitive and individual activities, with procedures of the past simply being repeated without a precise plan or approach. Alternatively, activities are done reactively, based on market pressures.

### New customer acquisition

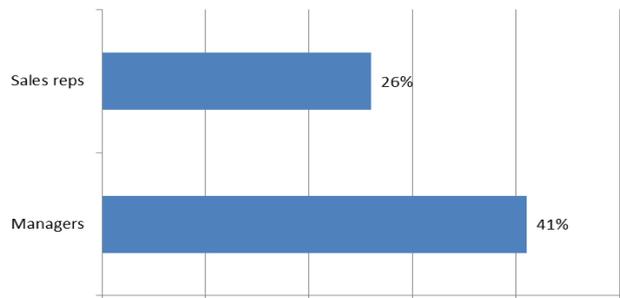
Only 16% of sales people say they have clearly defined objectives for sales to new customers – the figure for managers is 30%. Too few companies have a strategy for how to gain and keep new customers.



We have defined objectives for sales to new customers

### Customer Rebuy strategy

Another gap between sales managers and sales people is in the perception of the company’s process to increase customer rebuy. Only 26% of the sales people have a clear understanding of how to increase a customer’s rebuy - here is a clear potential for improvement in order to increase sales – whereas 41% of managers say there is a process for rebuy.



We have defined how customers should be processed to increase their rebuying

### The conclusions are very clear

The results indicate that a structured and process-oriented approach to sales is an under-rated element in sales. Many companies must make major improvements in sales processes and structures to optimize their sales. Getting alignment on basic principles will help to get sales people successful faster and to provide a more consistent customer experience. Companies also continuously have to review their sales process to ensure that sales efforts are in line with the strategy. Sales processes and structure are essential to bring businesses from a strategy or market objectives to a concrete outcome.

